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A Rowland for an Oliver,

ADDRESSED TO

MR. WANSEY,

ON HIS

LETTER

TO THE

BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

By G. W. 

“For his religion it was fit
To suit his politicks and wit.”

Hudibras.

Salisbury:

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A ROWLAND, &c.

SIR,

I CANNOT suppose the Bishop of Salisbury will think of making any Reply to your illiberal Letter, and I am persuaded his superior understanding and his virtuous character will prevent his being hurt by it.

To him, even, who would wish to come forward in his cause, he might say, "*non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis.*" But as your Letter involves in it severe, and I am sure unjust animadversions on the conduct of a large body of men; in their defence, I shall say a few
B words,

words, and make such other observations as the perusal of your Letter suggests. You begin with saying, "*you wish to address his Lordship with all the deference due to his exalted station, the amiableness of his private life, and the deserved eminence of his literary character.*"

This is certainly candid, and whilst it bears testimony to the goodness and learning of the person you address, it seems also a pledge that you will keep in mind the language with which you set out: we shall see how far this is the case as we proceed in the consideration of your extraordinary production.

I shall say nothing as to whether it were *proper or not* to address the *public* concerning a Charge which was *not published*, or whether an imperfect account from a newspaper ought to be considered, *as being published under his Lordship's eye*, or as authorising you to attack *in toto*, what you conceived to be the purport of the Charge. I can allow something for the vanity of *youthful authorship*, in the redoubted historian of an Excursion to America, who possibly might wish to try his talents upon another subject,

ject, and to convince his friends, and the public in general, that he was improved *in grammar*, if not in *politeness*. You might have felt a conscious superiority in stepping so nimbly forward from the ranks when you considered your brethren attacked, and methinks even now, with a look of self-complacent defiance,

“ I see, young Harry, with his beaver up.”

Shakespear.

But let us take the purport of the Bishop's Charge as we find it in the papers.—“ He enforced the necessity of exertions from the parochial Clergy, to prevent the delusions to which the lower classes of people, especially in villages, are thereby exposed, the dangers of innovation, and the false but prevalent philosophy of the times, were strongly urged, with their direful effects in a neighbouring country,” &c.

In answer to this, you say, “ *The Dissenters wish to know, my Lord, your method of preventing the lower classes of people from following,*” &c. You then ask with much sagacity, I must own, but not with quite so much liberality as might have been expected from the commencement of your

Letter, two very important questions—viz. *Are they to be persecuted, or have you directed your Clergy to out-preach them?* And here, as if you could not suppress the natural feelings of conscious triumph upon this extraordinary and ingenious fallacy, you enquire farther: *Do you intend to make short work with them, as Daniel de Foe hinted at, or convince their understanding in the manner my Lord Peter used to convince his brothers Martin and Jack?*

These uncharitable questions, for I shall not carp at the miserable way in which they are worded, are the more extraordinary, as in the next page, when you seem to have recovered from the impetuosity of the first brilliant fallacy, you gravely condescend to inform his Lordship that “*the increase of the Dissenters is not so much from their increased activity, as from the decreased attention of the Clergy to their parochial duties.*” The fact is, as I well remember, the attention of the Clergy to their parochial duties was very properly insisted on in his Lordship’s Charge, and it was by this chiefly that they were to prevent the delusions to which the lower classes of the people were exposed from the increased
activity

activity of the Dissenters. Yet instead of attending to this plain circumstance, you ask questions which can only imply that the Bishop, whose amiable private life you have acknowledged, would willingly prevent the increase of Dissenters, at the expence of humanity, justice, and mercy!

To state this, is to answer all your uncharitable inferences. The Bishop's venerable character, his virtues, and "his grey hairs, found in the way of righteousness, *testify against thee.*"

That the activity of the Dissenters was increased, he no doubt said; and he said true. I do not here enquire into their motives; much less do I wish to impute to them any intentional evil, though you have not hesitated to impute the most uncharitable motives to those who differ from *you*. Some of them may be actuated by spleen and envy, some by an angry subjection in the state, and many by what they consider as just and right; but no one thinks their activity decreased. *Non sic notus Ulysses!*

But

But be their object, their conduct, and their activity what it may, I am concerned to repel the invidious attacks made by you on the Clergy, as a body.

You say "*it is of no use to exclaim against the increasing number of the Dissenters, whilst the Clergy endeavour to make God's work a sinecure.*" If the Clergy in general do their duty in their station, it is not fair or true to say "they endeavour to make God's work a sinecure." They enjoy that provision which the state holds out to them. Do they in general disgrace their character and station, or not? Of this more, by and bye, You go on, "*Did you, my Lord, note this, (i. e. making God's work a sinecure) and recommend the study of the Scriptures as their supreme delight and occupation?*" To which you reply, *I wish you had!* The Clergy are much obliged to you for your kind wishes, and for your ready condescension in pointing out a topic, the discussion of which may tend so much to their edification and amendment. Though I have my doubts, notwithstanding the kindness of your wishes, and the readiness of your advice upon this occasion, whether the Bishop will
consult

consult you upon the subject of his next Charge.

But here comes a more grievous accusation. "*They (the Clergy) tell you (the Bishop) when you ordain them that they are moved by the Holy Ghost? You then ask, "Is it not known to your Lordship that this is in many instances a solemn farce, and instead of answering you that they trust they are so moved, would it not be more in character to answer in the words of John's disciples, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."* In answer to this question so shrewdly put, I can only say, it would not be more in character for them to say so, nor so much; whether any who are ordained consider ordination no more than as a solemn farce, rests entirely with their private feelings. Their own heart is answerable, which as you cannot look into, you have no right to affirm of it either this or that. It is a matter between them and their God whom they profess to serve; "who art thou, O man, that condemneth. To their own God they stand or fall."

If they *do* consider it as a solemn farce, they
are

are acting the part of hypocrites in the face of heaven; they must be ignorant of the importance and awfulness of the duty they undertake, and destitute of every serious feeling; whether they are so or not, the Bishop cannot tell any more than yourself. They come before him properly qualified, and with characters seriously attested, but I will venture to say that neither the Bishop of Salisbury, nor any upon the Bench, would think of ordaining a person who, they knew, had so ludicrous an idea of the solemnity, as you seem to think they must have.

The Clergy are next accused of not making their own sermons. I dare say some of them do not, but I know of no scriptural injunction that they shall do so, and if they preach the true and genuine doctrines of christianity conveyed in clear and intelligent language, it signifies very little who composes the discourse; when there are so many excellent sermons upon so many subjects, written by so many learned and pious men, there is no occasion to attribute it to idleness or ignorance, if the Clergy
some-

sometimes make use of them, in preference to their own compositions.

That they “ purchase of the Doctors wares, in general,” I deny, for the “ *Doctors wares*” are so execrably bad, at least what I have seen, that they are fitter for a congregation in Moorfields, than for a rational audience. Your conclusion is, that “ *a serious Christian who is hungry for the bread of life, will not be so served. He will rather withdraw himself from church, or will seek aid against his infirmities in those assemblies of Christians where he thinks the service of the heart is offered, notwithstanding the deficiency of forms and imperfections of language, and of grammar.*”

I answer, that the service of the heart *may* undoubtedly be offered, notwithstanding the “ differences of forms and imperfections of language and of grammar;” but it does not follow that because there are *no* imperfections of language or grammar, that the service of the heart should be *less sincere*; and your assumption that to your class of preachers only belongs this sincerity of heart and of worship, is neither candid,

candid, nor true. This could only be the case, if we could suppose that according to the exact ratio of badness of grammar, and imperfection of language, the religion would be pure, and the heart sincere.

What Dr. Clarke says in his sermon on a virtuous mind being the best help to understand religion, is certainly true, but that you should assume this *character* exclusively to yourselves and deny it others, is I think somewhat vain, and not a little unjust, at least you have brought no arguments to support your exclusive pretensions to "the spirit and life of the righteous."

Is not your language a little akin to the language of him, who in the temple prayed thus: "God I thank thee I am not as other men are, extortioners, adulterers, and even as this publican;" though I doubt very much whether one part of the boast may not fail you, that you *fast* twice a day or give *tithes* of all you possess. But we come here a little closer to the point, for you say, "*your Clergy, my Lord, to be respected, beloved, and followed, should learn to respect themselves, and live more according to*
the

the doctrines they preach. Then follows a picture of a London petit maitre parson from Cowper, which is a very good caricature, but what has it to do with the character of the parochial Clergy? Such a clerical caricature may possibly be found in London, but I am sure no where else, and there very seldom.—You remark, “*the more they depart from the principles and practices of their duty, the more room they give these horrid men, the Dissenters, to make converts.*”—Undoubtedly, and I wish all the Clergy in their stations were equally vigilant, but perfection is not to be found upon earth, individuals may perhaps disgrace the character they assume, and the cause they ought to support, but it does not follow that the Clergy in general depart so entirely from the principles and practices of their duty as you would have us believe.

“*But what signifies a good sermon, if the person hurries it over in such a manner as hardly to be understood by the congregation, and with a visible haste to be gone, and perhaps is seen no more till that day sen'night, when he comes again in the same haste?*”—Answer; *If a person hurries over a good sermon,*

sermon, in such a manner as to be hardly understood; "If he is in visible haste to be gone;" his sermon certainly cannot do much good: but the only thing to be argued, is, whether your representation be a fair representation of the Clergy in the pulpit? "*Of what service to the flock is such a pastor?*"—Answer; not much.—"*If they see him by chance in the evening, is it to receive good advice?*" This question I shall not answer, as you have done it yourself, but I shall take the liberty of examining your answer as it stands: "*No, you reply, he is either hunting, or shooting, or swearing, or drinking, or equipt like a jockey in a velvet cap, a huntsman's belt, or buckskin breeches, or a scarlet coat!*" Upon this point, like another Demosthenes, you seem to have laid the whole stress of your eloquence; for this you have reserved your most pointed interrogatives, and your most sonorous periods, ΟΥΚ ΕΧΘΡΟΣ; ΟΥ ΒΑΡΒΑΡΟΣ; ΟΥΚ ΕΧΩΝ ΤΑ ΗΜΕΤΕΡΑ; ΟΥΚ Ο, ΤΙ ΑΝ ΕΙΠΟΙ ΤΙΣ; Is he not an enemy? is he not a barbarian? a shooter, a hunter, a drinker, and swearer; does he not wear a red coat? Alas! how much have the Clergy to answer for. But let us examine the account a little. As to shooting and hunting, that cannot
last

last all the year, the intermediate time therefore I suppose must be taken up by drinking and swearing.—Let me ask you here one question.—Do you know any Clergymen who *do not* shoot and hunt, who *do not* drink or swear? For my own part, as to the two first crimes I can forgive them, as long as they are not the professed purpose of a person's life.—He is not the *worse* for taking occasionally the recreations of the field, nor the better for abstaining, unless they interfere with more immediate duties.—Suppose you knew twenty clergymen, ten of whom were guilty of hunting and shooting, and other enormities, and ten were not, do you think it would be fair to say, when advice is sought for from a clergyman, he is, without exception, shooting or hunting, or drinking or swearing? But if out of the twenty clergymen, five only are guilty of hunting and shooting, and three of swearing and drinking, (by drinking, I suppose you mean drinking to excess), would it be fair to include the whole in your indiscriminate number of hunters, shooters, drinkers, swearers: nine out of ten of the parochial Clergy, are neither drinkers nor swearers—where they are, they are sufficiently marked.—And as to the
 hunters

hunters and shooters, I believe there is to be found among them, men as good, and as worthy and respectable, and as attentive to the duties of their stations and the calls of compassion, as among those who do not *hunt or shoot*, among those “ *who take the tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, but neglect the weightier matters of the law.*”

With respect to the belted jockies in velvet caps, buckskin breeches, and scarlet coats, I appeal to your own knowledge and experience. The place of your residence is the resort of many clerical characters, with some of whom you are acquainted, and you bear testimony to their good conduct; among these how many are there, precisely such as you describe; and where did you ever see a Clergyman in a scarlet coat? I am sure the sight is not common. Did you ever see Mr. Canon —, Mr. Canon —, or the Rev. Mr. Benson, so accoutered? I do not think out of all you know or have heard of, you could mention *one*; but if you could, as I am sure I could bring ninety-nine or nine hundred and ninety-nine who never appeared in a scarlet coat, it only shews an eagerness to abuse, though
you

you can lay hold of nothing but what daily experience and common sense confutes.

Possibly, as you made use of a simile, which you very justly term *a rough one*, in which you represent yourself and brethren, as so many harmless sheep, and the Bishop and his Clergy, as barking dogs ! Your imagination may have got the better of your cooler discrimination, and you may have thought you saw the Clergy all dressed in red, with guns, pistols, swords, stakes, and faggots, coming in fury to commit slaughter on yourself and your lamb-like brethren. But I will suppose by a *red coat*, you intended metaphorically to describe the patriotism the Clergy displayed, upon a late occasion, when we were threatened with a visit from the French ! Whatever it was, this *red coat* seems to have taken such hold on your imagination, as to have hurried you instantaneously into scenes connected with so fearful an emblem.

———“ What spirit say,
To battle hurries me away ?”

Something must be said of the Clergy being the supporters of the present war, and the story
you

you tell of the Bishop of Beauvais and our good King Richard, is a very pretty one. But how to introduce it? Oh, nothing so easy! Do not the Clergy wear *red coats*?

“ Now you talk of a gun, I'll tell you a story.”

Joe Millar.

However there is more beauty and propriety in the manner of introducing your story and reflections, than I first imagined.—And herein you appear to resemble some of the greatest masters of eloquence. Such is that artful introduction in Virgil, of the

“ Scabrâ rubiginè tela, et galeas pulsabit inanes.”

Georg. book 1.

Such also is that striking transition of Edmund Smith, on the death of Pocock, where having mentioned the Confusion of Tongues at the Tower of Babel, he immediately adds,

Vestitur hinc tot sermō coloribus

Quot tu, *Pococki*, dissimilis tui

Orator effers.

The meaning of which if it should not immediately occur to you, I have no doubt but some of the gentlemen of the Clergy who do not wear red coats, who are “ sensible and moderate men,”
and

and much in your esteem," will explain to you.— If you should not have seen it, it only shews how unfounded is that opinion of the critics, who contend that where there is a striking coincidence in writings, there must be plagiarism, though I am convinced the beauty of the transition in your Letter, from the mentioning a "*red coat,*" to the masterly philippic against war, "*with the story of the Bishop of Beauvais,*" &c. was entirely your own, and not copied from Demosthenes, Virgil, or Edmund Smith.

As you have been so kind as to tell us a story, in return I will tell you another.

Soon after the Dissenters, who left England on account of alleged persecution, were settled in their land of Promise, New England, they felt themselves, of course, quite happy. What can be so delightful, say they, as to live in a country, however rude and remote, where every one may profess his belief as he chuses; where we are beyond the reach of the arm of civil oppression; where no one can interfere with his neighbour's opinion, and where we can enjoy to its full extent religious liberty.

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Happen-

Happening one day to find among them a person whom they suspected to be a Catholic, he was tried, condemned, and hanged; and a merchant from England asking for what crime the man suffered, O, said they, *he was not of our opinion!*

If you should have any doubt about the fact, you will find that the first laws made by the settlers in New England, denounced DEATH to any priest who, after three days, should be found in their dominions. This is indeed rather a *circumstance* than a story, and I confess, it is inferior to yours both in strikingness of incident, and in moral application. To speak seriously; all such stories, if they are intended to make any set of people appear criminal, I reprobate, but as you mentioned yours, I hope mine may be taken in good part. It will at least shew the imperfections of our common nature, and the charity *one* ought shew to the other, if it does not in some measure confirm what is said by Swift; “*We are certain that we (the Church) tolerate you, but we are not certain, that you (Dissenters) should you gain the upper, would tolerate us!*”

As

As to the Vicar of Scarborough, I shall leave him to fight his own battles, with so powerful an antagonist, but I must make, in my humble way, some remarks on what you have said.

Here is the dreadful account: "*The Rev. Mr. Kirk, Vicar of Scarborough, surrounded by a large body of soldiers, (of men armed with instruments of death and slaughter—men trained to the art of destroying their fellow creatures) holding a pair of colours in his hands, and thus addressing the Deity, (whose darling attributes are mercy and compassion):*" "*Before thee, O Lord, we display these standards, and with the profoundest reverence consecrate! (Oh horrid) consecrate and dedicate them to thy service and to thy glory! And may we all (soldiers, sinners, and all) may we all exert our utmost endeavours for the protection of our holy Religion, and whatever else is, or ought to be dear to us (Query—does he include the Vicarage of Scarborough?) as a christian people. (Of this I suppose every soldier is to be a sufficient judge.) Grant this, O heavenly Father, through the merits of thy dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

Then comes the pathetic exclamation—"Is
this

this, my Lord, the spirit of that religion you uphold—impossible! Rash impious mortal, thou consecrator of human slaughter, put a turban on thy head, and never look into any book but the Koran!"

Quere; is this addressed to the Bishop of Salisbury, or the terrible Vicar of Scarborough? You ask: "*weak man, does the Almighty want thy effort, the services of a worm to advance his glory?*" Certainly not. But in the profoundness of your philanthropic and pathetic reveries, which I should be sorry to disturb, did it never occur to you that there might be such a thing as self-defence? and if it were just in individuals, that it might be equally so in nations? If a man was breaking into your house, with an apparent intent to rob or murder, would you calmly desire him to go on, and not only to dispatch yourself, but your wife and children; or if you prayed to God to assist you and to give you strength to resist the violator of your repose, do you think it would be calling upon God to be the consecrator of human slaughter? Whether this case is at all apologous to the present war, is a point at issue with the condemners and supporters of that war. According to your account all soldiers are murderers. The
defenders

defenders of the country are soldiers, therefore all defenders of their country are murderers! I can mourn as much as yourself that hostility in the abstract, which "makes man a prey to man;" but before you can talk with propriety about the banners of death and slaughter, "men trained to the art of destroying their fellow-creatures," you must prove this country the aggressor; the epithet of "murderous" belongs only to those who like the French invade a peaceable, happy, industrious, and quiet nation, like the Swifs; who fight in defence of their laws, their property, and lives.

What heart did not glow at the noble struggle made by the Swifs for their liberties; what heart did not involuntary wish them well, and beat with hope that they would repel their unjust and merciless invaders! It is natural it should be so, and those feelings must have been acknowledged by all but such as with the affected cant of sophisticated sensibility exclaim, "O barbarous Swifs, to think of embruining your hands in blood;" whilst of the cruelties, the confiscations, the plunderings, the murders, on the other side, nothing more is said, by
these

these meek amenders of the world, than that these excesses may lead eventually to the future happiness of mankind!

As to the form of what is called "*consecrating colours*," if what charity, good sense, and religion would dictate upon the occasion, should be exceeded, the fault rests with the individual understanding of the person selected to do the office; unless it be true, as you say afterwards, that the Clergy are all abettors "of this unhappy war." "*Men whose professed business it is to preach peace on earth, and good will to men, to use such a senseless phrase as fighting for religion, and on any occasion, consecrate ensigns of war.*" I wish not to find fault with the construction of a sentence, but this is somewhat in the style of your inimitable Excursion, that is, there is no grammar in it; I admit this is a trifling fault among eloquent pleaders, and as you have made use of so many words, I will charitably suppose you *meant* something by them.

What I understand by them is, that it is the professed business of the Clergy to preach peace on earth, and good will to men. It is so; but
this

this is not all; it is their duty to preach against crimes, such as endanger the peace of communities, and such as arise from individual passions, among which I may just mention, but I hope without offence, envy, uncharitableness, and hypocrisy. “Woe unto you Pharisees, hypocrites.”

But let who will preach, and what they will, you have one consolation left; “*Men are shaking off their prejudices daily, and learning (what you think very proper) to judge for themselves.*”

I would here ask you what is your meaning when you say, Men are shaking off prejudices, because this is a phrase so much used upon many occasions, that if it were clearly defined exactly what *were* prejudices and what were *not*, we might come nearer to the question in hand. The subtle Mr. Philosopher, who declaims against the evils of property; the magnanimous Miss,* who is resolved to be a mother, with-

* Miss Wolfencroft, before she underwent the marriage-ceremony with the above-mentioned Philosopher, says, in one of her Letters,

without the ceremony of becoming *a wife*; the Atheist, who laughs at every idea of future retribution, "*equally disclaim prejudice.*" A gentleman* of the present age, who *like the two young Gentlemen in Swift*, has found out that there is no God: being asked his opinion of Sir Isaac Newton, who was a firm believer in Revelation, replied, Sir Isaac Newton was no authority, because he *was so prejudiced*: and upon being asked what he thought of his wonderful talents, which might exempt him *from ordinary prejudices*, he very candidly acknowledged that he was something superior to Jones, but not to be compared with Thelwall!

But with you, prejudice, as far as I can make out, consists in the belief in the Athanasian Creed, and subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles. These are, I must however tell you, only so far assented to as they *can be warranted by Scripture*; and of this every man must

Letters, "So I told the women I was with child, at which they stared!"

This Lady, I have been told, was *Gouverness* to the unfortunate Miss King.

* Mr. H——, the translator.

judge for himself. Possibly there are many *other prejudices*, which you would be glad to get rid of both in church and state, such as our having a King, &c.; but as you do not mention what they are, I shall say no more.

If it be "*on record in the debates of the House of Commons, that the Thirty-nine Articles are contrary to Scripture,*" it is only a proof that some people asserted it, but their *asserting* is no proof they are *shocking and contrary* to Scripture, unless the above *assertion* be a *demonstration*. If "*some of the Bishops have confessed the same,*" it seems that they are not all so prejudiced (according to your own ideas of prejudice) as you would have us think. It is plain, that though they were Bishops, they thought for themselves.

Your next proposition is, "*that the opposition of the great men of the state to new opinions is not always a proof of their fallacy.*" Admitted; but what follows.—"*The greatest character that ever appeared upon earth, met with the greatest opposition from the Chief Priests and Elders, and the cry was then no innovation.*"

The

The inference from this is, that the Bishops and Governors of these days are to all intents and purposes, the same as the Chief Priests and Elders of old, and the persons who now do all they can to oppose the existing order of things, are of the same spirit as the amiable and awful Being you introduced; that their principles are as benevolent, their opinions as just, and their life and practice as charitable and as blameless.

Which is paying yourselves a compliment, at the expence of the present Chief Priests and Elders, I think somewhat greater than you deserve. But if our Chief Priests and Elders oppose the doctrines of professor Wishampt,* and his shameless disciples; if they lift up their voice against principles which tend to sever all the bonds of social union, which in the end would strew the earth with carnage, they do what is their duty, and they pray to God long to preserve them from the "tyranny of Anarchy, or the gloom of Atheism." I do not mean to say that the Dissenters are disciples of professor Wishampt, more than ourselves,

* See Robertson's History of the Illuminati.

but

but when they assume to themselves the character or conduct of the disciples of the meek and crucified Jesus, they assume more than we are disposed to grant. The meekest martyr of the flock, whom you venerate as your Apostle; the patient, the lowly, the forgiving Dr. Priestly, speaking of the Clergy of the establishment, says, "*they are vermin, which deserve no mercy!*"*

Shew me such a sentiment in the doctrines of him and his lowly disciples whom you insinuate you resemble; shew me such a sentiment in any of the writings of the churchmen of the present establishment, and I will consent that Dr. Priestly shall new model the world, and humbly petition that he will have the goodness and condescension to make it wiser and better than it ever was before; and that he shall be King, and yourself, "Viceroy;"

"Dost thou like the plot, Trinculo?"

Shakespear.

"Those gentlemen who are such advocates for *mercy, in some instances, and in others, seem*

* Letters on Burke's Reflections.

entirely

entirely to forget the name, remind me of Mr. Brisk in the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Mr. Brisk professes to make love to Miss Mercy, but at last leaves her, and concludes, "that Mercy was a pretty lass, but *troubled with ill conditions*;" upon which *Prudence* very properly says to Mercy, did I not tell thee that Mr. Brisk would soon forsake thee: yea, he will raise up an ill report of thee, for notwithstanding his pretence to religion, and his seeming love to Mercy, Mercy and he are of tempers so different, *that* I believe they will never come together.—*Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 200.

As little foundation is there in what you say, "Remember, my Lord, the same objections you urge against Dissenters, were once urged against you, before the reformation, when you yourselves were the Dissenters, and abused as the broachers of new opinions!"

The opinions of the reformers at that time were founded on the Scriptures, on the authority of the fathers, and of universal tradition; what they opposed was the worshiping of images, the sale of indulgences, the prayers in an
unknown

unknown tongue, the doctrines that the bread and wine administered in the sacraments was really and truly, the identical body and blood of Christ; but you cannot prove that any Bishop, or Churchman, in these days avows doctrines so absurd, and so contrary to Scripture, as *they* did whom the first reformers opposed. The case therefore is not parallel; you must first explain, what *your principles are*, and prove that they appear as rational, as well founded, and as moderate, as the opinions of such a man as the immortal Chillingworth; you must also prove that the errors you oppose are as great as those which he so successfully combated; but this is what you do not prove, and what I therefore deny.

The story of "the King of Prussia" is just as applicable to the Dissenters, as it is to persons of the established religion.

The story of "one Pavier"—is the story of a madman.

"*But why, you ask, my Lord, should you be alarmed at the increase of the Dissenters?—They leave*

leave your Church in the peaceable possession of all their emoluments." The Church is much obliged to the Dissenters for their generosity, but if what the church received, depended upon what they were willing to leave, I fear it would go hard with it. "*They will not disturb you, if you do not disturb them?*" For the truth of this we appeal to history and experience.

"*Are they not Christians as well as yourselves, and full as diligent to approve themselves faithful followers of Jesus Christ?*" This God knows, but I am sure as long as they are faithful followers of Jesus Christ, and continue peaceable, and charitable, they will not be disturbed.

"*When infidelity and vice are stalking abroad without controul, and attacking religion on every side, is it time to shew your jealousy of them; be a little more liberal towards them, my Lord; on this important ground, they are your friends and fellow-labourers.*" When they shew themselves as diligent, and as earnest in attacking infidelity and vice, as they are now in attacking the amusements

ments and dress of the Clergy, it will be time enough to partake their labours, and go hand in hand with them.

"It is too much the fashion and custom of the dignitaries, to abuse us every now and then;" not more than it is your custom every now and then to abuse the dignitaries, and speak evil of authorities.

"The late Arch-Bishop of York, Dr. Drummond, was so illiberal as to abuse us in the House of Lords, by calling us men of close ambition."

"What did my Lord Chatham say; they are so, their ambition is to keep close to the College of Fishermen, and not of Cardinals; to keep close to the doctrines of the inspired apostles;" you seem to dwell with particular complacency on the comparison between yourselves and the inspired apostles, but as this is only a speech, and as one good speech, deserves another, I will refer you in return to the speech of Mr. Burke, by which on the debate, about the test act, many members who came down to the House with the intention of voting for the repeal, were thoroughly con-

convinced, and voted contrary to what they intended.

What "*Dr. Jebb says*," no one wishes to controvert: the privilege of private judgment, which you claim for yourselves only, be so candid as to extend to others.—

"*The motto of my book, though written a hundred years, is by no means inapplicable to the present times.*" Just as applicable as the following lines from the same book:

For his *religion* it was fit
To match his *learning* and *his wit*,
'Twas Presbyterian true blue
For he was of that *stubborn* crew.
Of errant *saints* whom all men grant,
To be the true *church militant*.
Call *fire, sword, and desolation*,
A thorough godly reformation.
A sect whose chief duration lies,
In odd perverse antipathies,*
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat *still amiss*,

* The religion of the Presbyterians, consisted chiefly in opposition to the Church of England, and in quarelling with the most innocent customs then in use, as the eating of Christmas-pies, plum-porridge at Christmas, which they conceived the most heinous sins.

More

More pevish, cross, and splenetick,
 Than dog distract, or monkey sick.
 That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong than others the right way :
 Compound for sins *they are inclined to,*
By damning those they have no mind to,
 Still so perverse and opposite,
 As if *they worshipp'd God for spite,*
 The self-same thing *they will abhor*
One way and long another for.
 Free-will they one way disavow,
 Another, nothing else allow.
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men, all sin.
 Th' Apostles *of this fierce religion,*
Like Mahomet's were as and widgeon.
To whom our knight, by fast instinct
Of wit and temper was so linkt,
 As if hypocrisy and nonsense*
 Had got th' advowson of his conscience !

*" I have no doubt but that if we had some rich
 benefices to give away, we should have many of*

* Dr. Bruno Ryves gives a remarkable instance of a fanatical conscience in a captain who was invited by a soldier, to eat part of a goose with him ; but refused, because he said it was stolen : but being to march away, he who would eat no stolen goose, made no scruple to ride away upon a stolen mare ; for plundering Mrs. Bartlet of her mare, this hypocritical captain gave sufficient testimony to the world the old Pharisee and new Puritan have consciences to " strain at a knat and swallow a camel."

your Clergy join us." Possibly; but as this only amounts to a doubt, it proves nothing, and for myself I do not believe it. You speak a little more confident about the next point, that is, you would "*venture a small wager, that Dr. Horsley himself, give him a thousand a year more than he has, would turn his artillery against those very doctrines, he now appears so earnest to maintain.*" Answer; I would venture a small wager he would not, but I do not know how it can be decided, unless we appeal to Dr. Horsley himself, or unless we were gifted with deeper intuition into human nature, than we are. But there is no end of *doubting and laying small wagers*; for my own part, *I have no doubt* but that Dr. Horsley is as upright and conscientious, as he is learned, but I know he will not hastily be forgiven, for the complete dressing he has given some of your fraternity—for having foiled at his own weapons your most renowned champion!*

"Yet, my Lord, I should be very sorry to see any sect of Dissenters, established upon the

* See Dr. Horsley's Controversy with Dr. Priestley.

ruins of the Church." As you are so fond of doubting, you will allow me in my turn to doubt this, which I think is but fair. But let us see your reason. "*History too fatally points out that the spirit of man leads those who think they have been oppressed, to oppress in their turn.*"

We thank you for this hint, which, by the bye, is rather letting the cat out of the bag. As you asked whether the "*Bishop meant to make short work of the Dissenters as Daniel de Foe hinted at,*" I might ask in return whether, if it were in your power, you would not make short work with the Clergy, as *Napper Tandy hinted at*, when in his curious proclamation, he proposed to *exterminate the oppressors*, but we trust we shall not be yet in a situation, to put your charity and forbearance to the trial; if ever you get the upper hand, we shall be satisfied with the same toleration the government extends to you and to all professions, though your *fears* of what *might* be the consequence, plainly indicate what we have to expect!

"Every man of the least reasoning, must be shocked at the enormities committed in France."

I should

I should hope so, but it is an odd circumstance, that during the commission of the most bloody enormities, scarce any of the declaimers against the tyranny and oppression of this country, expressed any particular horror, at the carnage and cruelties committed in France; many even seemed to consider them, as necessary to the accomplishment of their pure and perfect system, of final regeneration, and amendment in man.* Did not the Corresponding Society, even during the tyranny of the dark and terrible Robespierre, publicly applaud the benevolent labours of the Convention. Was there not a visible connection between the discontented in this country, and the illumined in France? —from

——“ Camp to camp
The hum of either army silly sounds
That the fixt centinels almost receiv'd
The secret whispers of each others watch.”

Shakespear.

Thanks however to the vigilance of government, we escaped, and I trust shall escape, the
blessed

* Mr. Godwin thinks that human nature will one day be *sublimed* into such perfection, that there will be no occasion for *men*

blessed effects of French doctrines, French morals, French government, and French religion.

But "*it is the opinion of many, that there is even now, as much real vital religion in France as there has been these hundred years.*" This shews how candid and charitable you can be on some occasions—I cannot therefore but wish, as you suppose the vital spirit of Christianity to exist in a nation which has drenched the earth with blood, which has publicly mocked the majesty of heaven, by worshiping two naked strumpets, with oak garlands on their heads, in the very sanctuary of religious adoration, that you would not think *all religion* dead in those who sometimes shoot or hunt, or that a clegyman in

to die, unless they choose it. What a fine thing it is to be a philosopher! When the day of such perfection shall arise upon earth, when the powers *that be* shall be trodden down, and the scarlet whore of Babylon destroyed, what a day of triumph will it be to Messrs. Holcroft, Godwin, &c.

I can imagine Mr. H. Wansey himself, partaking of the general joy, and addressing *a friend* of kindred endowments,

"This day, O Mister Doodle, *is a day*
Indeed, a day we never saw before!"

Tom Thumb,

praying

praying to God against the misery and crimes with which we are threatened, and relying on his arm to assist us in repelling a merciless foe, that therefore he must be the consecrator of slaughter, and fit only to study the Koran !

I have now gone through all your observations, and as I shall not enter into any farther correspondence with you, I here take my leave. If what I have said should appear harsh or offensive to any respectable and virtuous man of your persuasion, I shall be sorry. I have fair right to turn the stories, and stile of arguing, which you have adopted, upon yourself, though I again say, I reprobate arguing from *particulars* to Generals, from raking up old stories, which if they prove any thing, only prove the imperfections of our common nature. To yourself, I shall make no apology. The example you set entitles you to the same freedom; but to shew you I have no *ill will*, I shall say at parting, with Stephano, (for I suppose you consider all the Clergy as drunken butlers) "Give me thy hand, Trinculo; I am sorry I beat thee, but while thou livest keep a good tongue in thy head."

head." *Tempest*.—If I might add a little advice with respect to Authorship, I would just whisper to you two words:

Ne futor ultra crepidam:
which signifieth,
Stick to the spinning Jenny.

I am, SIR,

With pleasure,

Your obedient Servant.

